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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 KATHMANDU 000021

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/05/2017
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [NP](#)
SUBJECT: NEPAL: ARMS MONITORING TO START, POLICE MONITORS A
POSSIBILITY

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Classified By: Ambassador James F. Moriarty for reasons 1.4(b/d).

Summary

¶1. (C) In a January 4 meeting, UN Special Envoy Ian Martin informed Ambassador Moriarty that arms monitoring operations by at least 15 UN monitors would begin o/a January 8 with the remaining contingent of 20 monitors on the ground by mid-January. Martin also reported that recruitment of 111 ex-Gurkhas to support UN arms monitoring would be finished January 4 with training to begin January 5 or 6. The report of the technical assessment team would likely be presented to UN Security Council members on January 5 with discussion possibly on January 11. Martin also indicated that the GON might request police advisors be added to the overall UN monitoring mission in order to evaluate and advise on security preparations for the Constituent Assembly elections. He reported that cantonment sites continue to be ill-equipped to provide food and shelter to Maoist ex-combatants. Martin praised the Election Commission's hard stance vis-a-vis the political parties and hoped that recent ethnic/political riots in Nepalgunj would spur further debate on the interim constitution.

Arms Monitoring to Begin January 8

¶2. (C) On January 4, Ambassador Moriarty met with the UN Secretary General's Special Envoy to Nepal, Ian Martin, to

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discuss progress on arms monitoring and cantonment. According to Martin, the first group of arms monitors was in a four-day training session and would be sent to Nepalgunj, in the mid-West region, on January 8 to initiate monitoring activities. By January 8, there would be 15 UN arms monitors on the ground with the remaining 20 monitors to arrive by mid-January, he said. Martin reported that six of the seven main cantonment sites had received containers for securing

weapons with Rolpa the remaining exception due to transportation challenges. With two helicopters set to be operational by mid-January, Martin hoped eventually to have a total of four helicopters and one fixed-wing aircraft to support arms and election monitoring. The two helicopters now on the ground would allow the UN monitors to nail down satellite cantonment sites beginning January 7. Martin could not predict when arms management or cantonment of combatants would be completed.

Ex-Gurkha Recruitment Finalized January 4

13. (C) Martin indicated that the Joint Monitoring Coordination Committee, comprising representatives from the Nepal Army (NA) and People's Liberation Army (PLA), would complete recruitment on January 4 of the 111 ex-Gurkha Interim Task Force that would help support the UN arms monitoring mission. Pleased with the level of cooperation between NA and PLA committee members in the selection process, Martin believed training of the ex-Gurkha force would begin January 5 or 6. He noted that logistical support was still needed in order to deploy the force by mid-January, but was hopeful the Norwegian government might be forthcoming. Martin also suggested that the UNDP office in Nepal would use expertise some staff members had obtained in Afghanistan to assist in the registration of Maoist combatants as well as arms.

UN Nepal Report To Be Presented to UNSC January 5

14. (C) Martin expected the report prepared by the technical assessment team, which had visited Nepal in December, would be made available to UN Security Council members on January 5 in New York. Martin planned to depart on January 7 for UN Headquarters so he could be present for UNSC discussion of

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the report expected to take place January 11. With UNSC approval of the report, the UN would have the necessary mandate to establish a budget for its operations in Nepal, he said.

With Arms and Election Monitors, Maybe Include Police Monitors?

15. (C) The report proposed a total of 186 arms monitors and approximately 100 election monitors, including 75 UN Volunteers at the district level, Martin noted. Martin reported on a discussion he had recently with Dr. Suresh Chalise, Prime Minister Koirala's foreign policy advisor, at which he had raised the concept of bringing in foreign police advisors to evaluate and advise on security preparations for Constituent Assembly elections. According to Martin, Chalise agreed that more security was needed and suggested the UN should request whatever police support it deemed necessary for the elections. Martin indicated that Chalise would ideally like to see one police advisor for each of the 205 constituencies. He informed Chalise that the UN needed a request from the GON before it could propose the idea to the UN Security Council.

16. (C) The Ambassador pointed out that in recent discussions, Indian Ambassador Shiv Mukherjee had indicated that the Government of India (GOI) did not look favorably on bringing foreign police advisors into Nepal. However, the Ambassador averred, if the GON and UN agreed police advisors were necessary to secure free and fair elections, then we would be willing to weigh in with the GOI on this issue. Martin's political advisor John Norris opined that while 205 police advisors would pose a logistical nightmare for the UN and serious heartburn for the GOI, perhaps a smaller contingent of 15 - 20 advisors would be more palatable. In this scenario, each police advisor would be responsible for

evaluating security preparations for elections in roughly 10 constituencies. Martin believed the psychological impact on voters of a foreign police presence would be dramatic.

Cantonment Sites a Grim Picture

17. (C) Martin described a January 3 presentation by Padma Ratna Tuladhar, a former Health Minister close to the Maoists, in which Tuladhar painted a grim picture of the cantonment sites. According to Martin, Tuladhar had blamed both the Maoists and Government of Nepal (GON) for failing to deliver assistance or support to the Maoist cadre now living at the sites. Tuladhar had discussed convening a meeting with GON, Maoist and UN representatives to discuss site management. Martin supported this idea, but cited Maoist reluctance to become involved in site management and their proclivity for passing the buck to the GON. With little support from either the GON or Maoists, Martin noted, something as simple as delivery of tents to the cantonments had been exceedingly complicated. The Ambassador asked whether Martin was aware of what the Maoist leadership had done with the USD 3.2 million disbursed by the GON since November 2006 for maintenance of ex-combatants. Martin could not answer, but hoped he would know more once arms monitors were on the ground in the cantonment sites.

Election Commission Doing Good Work, Martin Says

18. (C) Martin opined that the working relationship between his staff and that at the Election Commission could not be better. He was supportive of the Election Commission's tough stance vis-a-vis the political parties. Martin questioned the Maoist commitment to re-establish Village Development Committees (VDCs). He also suggested that the Constituent Assembly elections would not be successful if the issues raised by the "Madhesi" people in the Terai, or lowlands, of

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Nepal were not adequately addressed. The Ambassador viewed positively Prime Minister Koirala's recent public questioning of the PM's powers under the interim constitution as a means to open the door for further debate within parliament of the draft interim constitution and a reexamination of the proposed role of dalits, ethnic minorities and women in the Constituent Assembly. Although the riots in Nepalgunj last week were unfortunate, Martin said, the upshot was that discussion had increased within political parties on the interim constitution and reallocation of voting constituencies based on population for the Constituent Assembly elections.

Comment

19. (C/NF) With the first tranche of UN monitors likely to begin arms management operations in some camps next week, Maoist pressure on the GON to present the interim constitution to the Parliament will increase significantly. PM Koirala will try to postpone debate on the constitution until after the full contingent of UN arms monitors is operational sometime in the next two weeks. Various political forces in Kathmandu, including Chief of Army Staff Katawal, are also moving behind the scenes to forestall quick promulgation of the constitution (septel). If they succeed, promulgation might be delayed until at least the end of January with formation of an interim government containing Maoists supposedly not to occur until completion of the arms management exercise. Post believes addition of UN police monitors to be a good idea.

MORIARTY